

# Message from the Secretary

## Greetings, all –

As we embark on a new fiscal year, our cabinet is also entering an important time of transition. Many of you no doubt followed the proceedings of the 2008 General Assembly, and have heard about the issues facing state employees: the budget and pension plan situations, the retirement incentive deadline that will hit us hard between now and January 2009. At the same time, for those reasons, we are re-engineering our own structure to streamline our organization and to meet future demands.

The Transportation Cabinet must become more nimble in reacting to the daily expectations placed upon us. Change can be unsettling, but there have been encouraging responses from our employees. They have shown fervor by embracing the challenges of transition.

As you know, the system of roads and bridges that we maintain has continued to grow while the cost of new construction has skyrocketed, and funds have become very limited.

A highway plan has been issued to replace House Bill 79, which eliminated the cabinet's ability to manage the plan and which Governor Beshear vetoed. The substitute plan contains all the projects recommended by the governor, the House and the Senate. Although there is obviously not enough money for all the projects, we will at least be able to consider all the needs and move them along if and when funding becomes available.

Flexibility in programs, flexibility in funding, and flexibility in the abilities of our employees are the keys to our future success. Our proposed organizational changes are designed to move us in that direction. As we lose much of our experienced workforce to retirement, please know that our goal is to enable you to provide the very best service to the public and to this agency.

Whether we maintain our roadways, design new roads, audit projects, or license those vehicles that travel our roads, it is imperative that we each do our part every day to ensure that transportation in the commonwealth is the very best it can be.

In the months ahead, we'll be working with each of the districts and departments to gather input and implement the ideas gained thus far. I thank you for your patience as we work through these challenges, for your continued professionalism and your dedication to this cabinet and the people of Kentucky. I look forward to meeting with more of you!



*Joe Prather*